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9

PHILLIPS
ROSSMO
PLASCENCIA

FEAR STATE

HARLEY QUINN

KEEPSAKE RISING!

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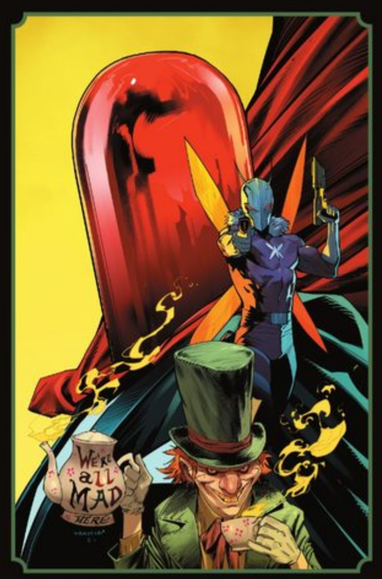

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CHRISTIAN WARD

GABRIEL HERNÁNDEZ WALTA

AND MORE

NOVEMBER

IT'S GOOD TO BE BAD!

GOTHAM CITY VILLAINS ANNIVERSARY GIANT

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ARKHAM ASYLUM.
THEN.

I WAS NEVER AFRAID OF THE DARK AS A KID.

NO NIGHTLIGHTS... NO CHECKING FOR **MONSTERS** UNDER THE BED...

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

TAP TAP TAP

FEAR STATE PART 3

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HARLEY QUINN CREATED BY
PAUL DINI AND **BRUCE TIMM**

SPIDERS DIDN'T BOTHER ME...

DR. QUINZEL IS ENTERING BLOCK J NOW...

...AND I ACTUALLY **ENJOYED** HEIGHTS.

GRRRRR...

RIDDLE ME THIS, DOCTOR...THE MORE YOU TAKE, THE MORE YOU LEAVE BEHIND. WHAT AM--?

AWAY FROM THE GLASS, NYGMA!

THIS WAY, DR. QUINZEL.

I ONCE WON A GAME OF HIDE-AND-SEEK BY ZIPPIN' MYSELF INTO SOME CARRY-ON LUGGAGE, SO DEFINITELY NO WORRIES ABOUT **CLAUSTROPHOBIA** HERE.

YOU SURE YOU'RE READY FOR THIS ONE?

Y-YES...**I'M READY...**

FOR THE MOST PART, I WAS A PRETTY **FEARLESS** KID.

BUT CLOWNS...?

IF YOU'RE SURE...

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THOSE BIG, SQUEAKY OVERSIZE SHOES AND STUPID RED NOSES USED TO MAKE ME A LITTLE QUEASY.

AT LAST...I'VE BEEN WONDERING WHEN IT'D BE MY TURN TO MEET THE LOVELY NEW DOCTOR...

I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I TOOK IMMERSION THERAPY A LITTLE TOO FAR.

ALLEYTOWN.

BUT NOW? NOW I'M JUST AFRAID OF THE **NORMAL** STUFF...

RUN, RED!

LIKE BEIN' AN **ABJECT FAILURE** WITH NO INHERENT SOCIETAL WORTH, DYIN' ALONE, AND BORIN' MY THERAPIST.

BELLA SAID THERE'S A CAR OUT FRONT WE CAN TAKE TO GET BACK TO GOTHAM.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS, HARLEY QUINN?

THEY WILL BE OKAY?

OH, AND **TOILET SNAKES.** I'M **TERRIFIED** OF TOILET SNAKES.

YOU MEAN CATWOMAN AND THE GARDENER?

ON THE SURFACE, FEAR IS **NATURAL** AND **HEALTHY...**

TAKIN' OUT KEEPSAKE AND HIS **CAUCUS OF CORRUPTION** IS EASY PEASY. THEY CAN TOTALLY HANDLE--

...A SURVIVAL INSTINCT MEANT TO PROTECT US AND WARN US OF POTENTIAL THREATS.

--THEMSELVES.

BOOM

AS WE GROW AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WORLD, OUR FEARS CHANGE AND ADAPT WITH US.

SUDDENLY, THE **MONSTER** UNDER THE BED BECOMES CRIPPLING SEPARATION ANXIETY AND UNHEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS.

KEEP MOVING! WE HAVE TO FIND--

IS...IS THAT...?

BASICALLY, WE LEARN THAT IT'S NOT VERY LIKELY THAT A THREE-HEADED SERPENT **WITH THE BODY OF A CHIHUAHUA** LIVING IN THE CLOSET IS GOING TO EAT ME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT...

1968...? JUST LIKE THE MODEL USED BY ***THE*** STEVE McQUEEN IN THE SINGLE ***GREATEST*** CAR CHASE IN CINEMATIC HISTORY...

...BUT **FAR** MORE LIKELY THAT I **WILL** BE ARRESTED FOR TAX FRAUD.

YOU CAN DRIVE IT?

DRIVE IT...? RED...

...I'M GONNA MAKE HER ***PURR.***

VRRRR

OR THAT I'LL COME TO ONE OF THOSE FOUR-WAY STOPS AND KEEP LETTING PEOPLE GO AHEAD OF ME...

****!

...AND THEN I'D GET STUCK IN SOME KIND OF **GROUNDHOG DAY** TIME WARP OF TRAFFIC HELL...

...THAT WOULD BE ******* TERRIFYING.

S.A.F.E. HEADQUARTERS. GOTHAM.

=KOFF=

HELP US! SOMEONE!

IN HERE! PLEASE HELP US!

HURRY... =KOFF=...THE SMOKE...

I'M... TRYING...

IT'S NOT MOVING!

COME ON...COME ON...

RRRNGH!

EVERYONE OUT! GET TO THE EXITS!

KRAK

I KNOW A FASTER WAY...

...THERE'S AN EXIT DOWN THIS HALLWAY AND TO THE--

RUN!

MY LEG!

SMOKE'S TOO THICK!

HELP!

THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE DOWN THERE!

THERE'S NO TIME! THE ENTIRE BUILDING COULD GO AT ANY SECOND...

I *HAVE* TO TRY.

GET THE REST OUT OF HERE!

BANG BANG BANG BANG

HELP ME!

SOMEONE HELP ME, DAMMIT!

I'M HERE. I'LL GET THE DOOR AND--

--WAIT...

LOCKWOOD.

YES...NOW HURRY UP AND OPEN THE DOOR! HUGO LOCKED IT FROM THE OUTSIDE.

YOU KNOW WHO *I* AM?

OF COURSE I DO... ***KEVIN.*** IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOME KIND OF APOLOGY FOR THE WHOLE KIDNAPPING THING...

...I'M ***SORRY***... OKAY?

NOW, CAN YOU PLEASE JUST ***OPEN*** THE DAMN DOOR?

YOU CALLED ME A ***LAPDOG***...

...YOU TOLD ME I WOULD ***NEVER*** AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.

YOU WOULDN'T ***ACTUALLY*** LEAVE ME IN HERE... WOULD YOU?

I MEAN, *I* THINK WE SHOULD LET HIM ***BURN***...

...HE'S AN ***. HE TOTALLY *DESERVES* IT.

HUH?

IT'S NOT ABOUT *DESERVE*...IT'S ABOUT DOING THE *RIGHT THING.*

EVEN IF THAT MEANS HELPING *BAD* PEOPLE.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... WHAT IS...?

NAH. LET HIM BURN. HE'S HURT A LOT OF PEOPLE...*YOU* INCLUDED.

YOU'D BE DOIN' THE WORLD *A FAVOR* IF YOU ASK ME.

RESPECTFULLY... KEVIN *DIDN'T* ASK YOU. AND *WE* DON'T GET TO DECIDE THAT'S WHAT'S *BEST.*

CAN'T YOU EVER JUST LET US *ENJOY* CONDEMNING SOMEONE TO A FIERY DEATH, YA *BOOB*?!

DON'T YOU *DARE* ACCUSE ME OF NOT LIKIN' *FIERY DEATH* INSIDE OF OLD PSYCHIATRIC CENTERS USED TO CAPTURE FORMER JOKER HENCHMEN--

SLAP

LOVE

SLAP

UNGH!

ENOUGH.

LOCKWOOD HURT ME. HE HURT A *LOT* OF PEOPLE...

...BUT I AM *NOTHING* LIKE *HIM.*

LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE.

WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

WELL, IT'S MORE LIKE HARLEY WAS TALKING TO ME... *I THINK...*

"...BUT I'M PRETTY SURE SHE'S GOT HER OWN STUFF TO WORRY ABOUT."

GOTHAM CITY 25 MILES

I ENJOY THIS! I LIKE THE NOISE.

YOU KNOW, THAT CAR CHASE IN *BULLITT* DIDN'T HAVE ANY ACCOMPANYING MUSICAL SCORE BECAUSE THE SOUND OF THE ENGINE WAS SO--

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!

KA-BOOM

KRAAAK

WSSSH

****!

IVY...? IVY, ARE YOU OKAY?

WE NEED TO GET OUT OF THE CAR!

FWSSSH

NOT THE CAR!

I'M NOT LETTING YOU LEAVE WITH *MY* PRIZE!

YOU'RE WORSE THAN THIS COCKROACH THAT I FOUND IN MY DORM ROOM FRESHMAN YEAR.

I TRIED TO SQUASH IT WITH A BOOT, I SPRAYED IT WITH BUG SPRAY, I EVEN PURCHASED THIS BLACK MARKET CHEMICAL STUFF THAT I *THINK* I LATER LEARNED WAS BANNED IN *RUSSIA*. NOTHIN' WORKED!

GIVE ME THE IVY KEY...

...OR I *WILL* TAKE *IT* FROM YOU!

I AM KINDA LOOKIN' FORWARD TO SEEIN' YOU TRY THAT, ACTUALLY.

HEY, RED...I THINK I GOT AN IDEA.

THWIP

OH, KEEPSAKE...

...WOULD YOU BELIEVE THAT AN OVERLY VERBAL EX-VILLAIN WITH EMOTIONAL, TRUST, ACCEPTANCE, AND GUILT ISSUES...?

...CAN FLY?

GET OFF, QUINN! YOU'RE GOING TO BREAK--

IS THAT AN UNNATURALLY LARGE *FIRE-SPEWING* GUN YOU'RE COMPENSATING WITH...?

...OR ARE YOU JUST *HAPPY* TO SEE ME?

KRSSH

STOP... DON'T TOUCH--

--THAT!

THANKS FOR THE ASSIST, BABE.

THAT WAS VERY FUN. I ENJOY BEATING KEEPSAKE.

REASON 984 WHY I LOVE YOU...

I AM NOT THE COCKROACH IN THIS SITUATION!

I *TRIED* TO PLAY NICE... I GAVE YOU A CHANCE TO PARTNER WITH ME...

ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS WORK WITH ME, OR STAY OUT OF MY WAY!

BUT INSTEAD, ALL YOU DID WAS--

BAM!

LOOK TWICE OR GET RUN OVER BY AN UNMARKED VAN DRIVING FIFTY MILES OVER THE SPEED LIMIT, I ALWAYS SAY.

ATTACK!

GET IN. WE'RE GOING TO SAVE GOTHAM.

SORRY, WE LOST TRACK OF ***CREEPSAKE*** BACK IN THE TERMINAL.

FIGURED HE MUST HAVE GONE AFTER YOU TWO.

WAIT... SPEAKING OF...WHERE'D HE GO?

LEAVE HIM. RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT ***BIGGER*** ISSUES AHEAD OF US.

CLIMB IN BACK...

YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE THE COMPANY. BELLA AND I WEREN'T REALLY SURE WHAT ELSE TO DO WITH THEM, BUT WE DIDN'T WANT TO JUST LEAVE THEM AT THE TERMINAL IN ALLEYTOWN.

SELINA... YOU THINK OF EVERYTHING, YOU BEAUTIFUL, LEATHER-CLAD ANGEL.

"IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE..."

...WHY WOULD HUGO DESTROY HIS OWN OFFICE?

DON'T MOST KILLERS TRY TO ***HIDE*** THE BODY?

YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THIS WASN'T A PLACE TO ACTUALLY ***HELP*** THE CLOWNS...BUT HOW BAD WAS IT, ***EXACTLY?***

I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT--

RUMBLE

MOVE!

LOCKWOOD... ***HELP...*** MY LEGS ARE ***STUCK!***

KEVIN.

I'M SORRY.

NO! YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE!

UNGH!

COME ON...

IT'S NO USE.

NO GOOD DEED...

DON'T STOP TRYING... I CAN'T LIFT THIS ALONE...

SAM?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?

OBVIOUSLY SAVING YOUR ***.

SO CAN WE SAVE THE MUSHY PART OF THIS CONVERSATION FOR WHEN WE'RE ***NOT*** IN MORTAL DANGER?

I CAN SEE THE WAY OUT!

WAIT...

WHAT'S WRONG? WE'RE SO CLOSE...

I'M...I'M ACTUALLY AFRAID OF FIRE.

THE ADRENALINE IS WEARING OFF...AND...I'M-- I'M AFRA--

CLOSE YOUR EYES. I'LL LEAD YOU THE REST OF THE WAY.

SO...IS **NOW** A GOOD TIME FOR THE **MUSHY** PART OF OUR CONVERSATION?

IS **NOW** A GOOD TIME TO ASK YOU OUT TO DINNER?

I DON'T KNOW IF ALMOST DYING IN A BURNING BUILDING MAKES YOU HUNGRY, BUT I COULD GO FOR SOME PANCAKES.

I'VE JUMPED OUT OF AIRPLANES WITHOUT A PARACHUTE...

...I'VE FACED DOWN THE JOKER, MR. FREEZE, BANE, AND KILLER CROC...

ONCE THEY'RE REUNITED, THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH POWER TO CALM THE ENTIRE CITY OF GOTHAM...

...IF WE'RE NOT TOO LATE.

UNDERNEATH GOTHAM CITY.

...HELL, I'VE EVEN FACED OFF AGAINST BATMAN AND I'D SAY I GOT IN AT LEAST A FEW GOOD PUNCHES.

WE'RE NOT. THIS WILL WORK.

WAIT... RED...

YOU'VE GOT THIRTY SECONDS, HARLEY.

SOMETHING IS WRONG?

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT...I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF YOU'LL ***UNDERSTAND.***

EXPLAIN.

BUT DESPITE ALL OF THE SEEMINGLY HORRIFYING THINGS I'VE DONE...

...THE **SCARIEST** THING I'VE EVER DONE IS OPEN MYSELF TO PAM...

THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE...THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU...OR...**HER**... QUEEN IVY...

...SHE SAID SHE **CAN'T** LOVE ME. THAT LOVING ME IS SOMEHOW A **WEAKNESS.**

WHAT IF... WHAT IF YOU TWO **MERGE** AND I STILL DON'T GET **YOU** BACK?

I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU. NOT AGAIN.

I'M **SCARED,** RED.

...TO MAKE MYSELF **VULNERABLE**... TO **DEPEND** ON ANOTHER PERSON...

BECAUSE IF WE LET SOMEONE IN THAT DEEPLY AND THEY LEAVE, OR THEY LET US DOWN...

I'M SCARED TOO, HARLS.

MAYBE... MAYBE WE DON'T HAVE TO GO IN THERE AT ALL. WE CAN JUST **LEAVE** RIGHT NOW...

JUST US.

...**NOTHING** IN THE WORLD HURTS MORE THAN THAT.

I'D HAPPILY DEFUSE A BOMB IN SHARK-INFESTED WATER **WHILE** FIGHTING BATMAN...

I AM JUST A PART OF A LARGER WHOLE, HARLEY QUINN. **AREN'T YOU?**

DAMMIT... I HATE WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT...

I **GUESS** WE HAVE TO GO SAVE GOTHAM CITY NOW...

YES...

...BUT FALL IN **LOVE?**

THERE'S NOTHING MORE **TERRIFYING** THAN FALLING IN LOVE.

...BUT WE'LL DO IT **TOGETHER.**

NEXT: VINES

THE END WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

WORLD of KRYPTON

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Written by
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Art by
MICHAEL AVON OEMING

Covers by
MICO SUAYAN

DECEMBER
6 issues

INTERVIEW WITH
JOSHUA WILLIAMSON

The creative team of writer Joshua Williamson and artist Jorge Molina join *Batman* with issue #118, the start of a four-part arc that brings the Dark Knight out of Gotham City—and face to face with a new villain named Abyss, poised to turn Batman's greatest strengths against him.

HOW DID IT FEEL WHEN YOU GOT THE CALL TO WRITE *BATMAN*?

When I got the call from DC to write the *Batman* ongoing series, it was super surreal. I've wanted to write Batman my whole life. I even have a Batman tattoo. The night I got the job, I watched the 1989 *Batman* movie, just to remind myself of why I love the character. I couldn't wait to immediately dive in.

WHY IS THIS A GREAT JUMPING-ON POINT?

I wanted to make sure that even if you haven't been reading the series, you could jump right into it. Coming out of the events of "Fear State," Batman has seen Gotham change and will actually leave the city for a bit. It's a new story and case that you can pick right up.

WHAT DOES JORGE MOLINA BRING TO THE STORY YOU ARE WRITING?

Jorge brings a calm horror intention to the art. I've been a fan of Jorge for a long time and recommended him years ago. Jorge has brought so much thoughtfulness and energy to Gotham and Batman.

HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO WHAT JAMES TYNION IV HAS BUILT FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS ON *BATMAN*? WHAT NEW ELEMENTS ARE YOU BRINGING IN?

I wanted to make sure I would be honoring what James has been doing for the last two years. He really brought a lot of excitement with new characters, ideas, and toys. I wanted to keep that running and introduce new things and characters, like the new villain Abyss. For me, though, I wanted to get back into Bruce's head and make sure that everything is through his point of view.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT ABYSS, AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR BATMAN?

I've always found it interesting how Batman uses the darkness and shadows as a weapon. Then I started thinking, "What if someone could use that against him?" That's where we started developing Abyss. They are a character who can take the way Batman uses darkness, learn from it, and turn it against him.

DON'T MISS
BATMAN #118
ON SALE IN DECEMBER!

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